

I have been a practicing nurse for over 25 years. I love clinical nursing and have felt privileged to care directly for thousands of patients over the years. . . . I have developed expertise in my practice over the years that has allowed me to have a significant impact not only on the quality of care my patients receive, but also in the growth and professional development of less experienced colleagues Since January of this year, I have come to terms with the fact that I am infected with not one, but two potentially life-threatening diseases. . . . I have had to have weekly blood tests drawn—over 90 tubes of blood since January. . . . Experience to date is that treating a person infected with both HIV and Hepatitis C is extremely difficult and that each infection makes it more difficult to successfully treat the other.

That one moment in time changed many other things. In addition to the emotional turmoil that it has created for myself, my family, my friends, my peers—it has cost me much more than I can ever describe in words. I am no longer a practicing health care provider—I made the decision to not return to my clinical practice setting where I have worked for over 20 years. In the process, I have abruptly been forced to leave many colleagues with whom I've worked for many years and who are as much family as peers to me. The harder decision for me has been the decision I've made not to return to clinical nursing.

This injury didn't occur because I wasn't observing universal precautions that are designed to reduce health care workers' exposure to blood-borne pathogens. This injury didn't occur because I was careless or distracted or not paying attention to what I was doing. This injury and the life-altering consequences I am now suffering should not have happened . . . and would not have happened if a safer needlebox system had been in place in my work setting.

Karen Daley is now battling against two devastating diseases. And it didn't have to happen. Unfortunately, this scene is repeated more than 1,000 times a year—in communities across the country.

Lynda Arnold, a 30-year-old registered nurse and mother of two adopted children, is now HIV-positive as a result of a needlestick injury she received in an intensive care unit in Lancaster, PA, in 1992. She has started the Campaign for Health Care Worker Safety. Lynda writes,

I no longer work in a hospital. I no longer involve myself in direct patient care. I do not dream of growing old with my 30-year-old husband or dancing with my son at his wedding.

These cases are tragedies, and there are many more. At least 20 different bloodborne pathogens can be transmitted by needlestick injuries, including HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C.

The average cost of followup for a high-risk exposure is almost \$3,000 per incident—even when no infection occurs. The American Hospital Association estimates that a case can eventually cost more than \$1 million for testing, medical care, lost time, and disability payments.

Up to 80 percent of needlestick injuries could be prevented with the use of safer needle devices currently avail-

able. However, fewer than 15 percent of American hospitals use these products. The primary reason for not adopting steps to create a safer workplace is the cost. But the consequences are severe.

Safer needle devices do cost approximately 25 cents more than a conventional syringe. But the net savings from avoiding the excessive costs associated with workplace injuries are also significant. Hospitals and health care facilities in California are expected to achieve annual net savings of more than \$100 million after implementing a proposal similar to the one now under consideration.

This is not a partisan issue. The companion bill in the House has almost 140 cosponsors—including more than 20 Republicans from across the political spectrum.

Similar bills have recently passed in California, Texas, Tennessee, and Maryland, and have been introduced in more than 20 other States.

These protections have the strong support of the American Nurses Association, Kaiser Permanente, the American Public Health Association, the Consumer Federation of America, and many, many other groups that represent nurses, doctors, and other health care workers. In addition, the Massachusetts Hospital Association and other State level associations have supported these bills at the State level.

There is no excuse for inaction. Time is of the essence. Every day 3,000 more accidental needlesticks occur. We need to act as soon as possible. We owe prompt action and greater protection to those who devote their careers to caring for others.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, in my 11 years in the U.S. Senate I have rarely seen such an opportunity to fight against big Government and defend local decisionmakers like parents and teachers.

The Democrats are signaling their intent to hamstring local schools by commanding them to focus their efforts on issues which are deemed important inside the Capital Beltway, not within their homes and communities. I feel Montanans know what is best for Montana; we don't need Washington to tell us how to teach our children.

Congress should reject a one-size-fits-all approach to education and local schools should have the freedom to prioritize their spending and tailor their curriculum according to the unique educational needs of their children.

For too long, Washington has been part of the problem with education, enacting many well-intentioned programs that result in more redtape and regulation. Though Washington accounts for only seven percent of education funding, it accounts for 50 percent of the paperwork for our teachers and principals. It is time for Washington to lend a helping hand to our states.

Unfortunately, right now many of our Federal education programs are overloaded with so many rules and regulations that states and local schools waste precious time and resources to stay in compliance with the Federal programs. It is obvious that states and local school districts need relief from the administrative burdens that many federally designated education programs put on States, schools, and educational administrators.

I feel strongly and deeply that Montanans need to be in control of Montana's classrooms. I can not vote for anything that does not have local school control. I will continue to resist the attempts to take away your control of your child's schools.

Our goal on the Federal level is to help States and local school districts provide the best possible first-class education for our children that they can. We need to get the bureaucratic excess out of the face of the local educators so that they can do their jobs more efficiently and effectively.

Mr. President, we need to fix the problem of Federal controls in education. We need to allow the decision-making to be made by the people that we trust to educate our children. That is what really counts.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SPECTER. On behalf of the leader, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CHANGES TO THE BUDGETARY AGGREGATES AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ALLOCATION

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, section 314 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended, requires the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to adjust the appropriate budgetary aggregates and the allocation for the Appropriations Committee to reflect amounts provided for continuing disability reviews (CDRs), adoption assistance, and arrearages for international organizations, international peacekeeping, and multilateral development banks.

I hereby submit revisions to the 2000 Senate Appropriations Committee allocations, pursuant to section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act, in the following amounts:

(In millions of dollars)

	Budget authority	Outlays
Current Allocation:		
General purpose discretionary	534,115	544,113
Violent crime reduction fund	4,500	5,554
Highways		24,574
Mass transit		4,117
Mandatory	321,502	304,297

(In millions of dollars)

	Budget authority	Outlays
Total	860,117	882,655
Adjustments:		
General purpose discretionary	+427	+368
Violent crime reduction fund		
Highways		
Mass transit		
Mandatory		
Total	+427	+368
Revised Allocation:		
General purpose discretionary	534,542	544,481
Violent crime reduction fund	4,500	5,554
Highways		24,574
Mass transit		4,117
Mandatory	321,502	304,297
Total	860,544	883,023

I hereby submit revisions to the 2000 budget aggregates, pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, in the following amounts:

(In millions of dollars)

	Budget authority	Outlays	Deficit
Current Allocation: Budget Resolution	1,429,064	1,415,495	-7,413
Adjustments: CDRs, adoption assist- ance, arrears	+427	+368	-368
Revised Allocation: Budget Resolution	1,429,491	1,415,863	-7,781

FISCAL YEAR 2000 ENERGY AND WATER APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, the Energy & Water Appropriations Conference Report for Fiscal Year 2000 passed the Senate by an overwhelming vote of 96-3 yesterday. I thank my friend and colleague, the senior Senator from new Mexico and chairman of the subcommittee, for his excellent work in negotiating this bill and bringing back a very strong conference report. I'd also like to commend our extraordinarily talented and creative staff, Alex Flint, David Gwaltney, and Lashawnda Leftwich without whom we could not have finished this bill.

There are three programs I would like to highlight. First, the conferees have provided \$98.7 million for biomass research. Last week, the Subcommittee held a hearing on biomass and heard testimony about a proposal by Sealaska Corporation to produce ethanol using surplus wood. I urge the Secretary to take a careful look at this project and support it within the funds provided.

Second, with respect to the wind program, the conferees funded it at \$31.2 million, an increase over the House level. Over the past few years, the Department has supported the Kozebue wind demonstration project, the only wind generation system in my state. According to the National Weather Service, the windiest cities in the country are in Alaska. If the Kotzebue project proves to be cost efficient, wind may become a major source of electrical power in my state where electric rates are as much as ten times the rate in the lower 48: 55 cents per kilowatt hour in Alaska versus 5 cents per kilo-

watt hour in states like Idaho. I urge the Department to continue its support of the Kotzebue wind project.

Lastly, the managers agreed to language urging the Department of Energy to evaluate nuclear medicine technology known as Positron Emission Technology or PET.

I am pleased that the conference report includes strong language directing the Department of Energy to report back to the committee on what steps it can take to give immediate support to a new laboratory at the University of California—Los Angeles which will develop pioneering new molecular-based treatments for disease.

These new treatments will use genetically engineered mouse models of several human diseases and track progress with a miniaturized version of positron emission tomography (PET) called Micropet.

While scientists and clinicians have been able to diagnose and stage human illnesses, including most types of cancer and other diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimers' using pet imaging, the UCLA research promises to expand the examination of the biologic basis of disease into new treatment of the molecular disorders that scientists now believe are the cause of disease.

I understand that the new laboratory at UCLA will need at least \$2 million in Federal funds during fiscal year 2000 from the other office at the Department of Energy, and I hope that the Department will make every effort to provide the needed funds to bring this critical project on line at the earliest time it can.

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY ACT

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today in support of legislation introduced by my colleague, the distinguished Senior Senator from Mississippi, Thad COCHRAN, and myself earlier this week, the Education for Democracy Act, which will continue successful efforts to enhance citizenship among our nation's youth.

Over the last decade, there has been much discussion about the purposes, successes and failures of American schools. We talk about how schools hold in trust our nation's future—the next generation of workers, parents and artists. One of the most important, and perhaps least mentioned, roles that today's students will play tomorrow is as citizens. Yet, in too many schools citizenship education is an afterthought to an American history or government course.

The Education for Democracy Act will reauthorize a highly successful program established by Congress in 1985 that helps meet these needs. The We the People . . . the Citizen and the Constitution program has demonstrated its effectiveness in fostering a reasoned commitment to the funda-

mental principles and values of our constitutional democracy among elementary and secondary education students. Now in its twelfth year, this program has provided 24 million students with instruction and learning opportunities that enable them to meet the highest standards of achievement in civics and government and that encourages active and responsible participation in government.

Studies have shown students benefit across the board from their exposure to this powerful program. An Educational Testing Service study found that students at upper elementary, middle and high schools levels significantly outperformed comparison students on all topics studied. Even more impressive were the results of a comparison of a random sample of high school students in the program with a group of sophomores and juniors in political science courses at a major university. The We the People . . . high school students outperformed the university students on every topic tested. Finally, an analysis of student voter registration at the Clark County School District in Las Vegas, Nevada revealed that 80 percent of the seniors in the program registered to vote compared to a school average among seniors of 37 percent.

Many of us here in this chamber are fortunate to have experienced firsthand the quality of this program. Each spring, outstanding classes of students from the around the country come to Washington to participate in the final round of national competitive hearings on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. While these students' knowledge of the Constitution is impressive, what is most striking is the students' excitement about the Constitution and their government.

This legislation would assure that students across the nation will continue to have access to this quality program. In addition, it would assure all of us of a stronger foundation for our country's future. I look forward to working with my colleagues to move this legislation forward and would urge others to join us as sponsors of this important measure.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, September 28, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,647,297,448,741.19 (Five trillion, six hundred forty-seven billion, two hundred ninety-seven million, four hundred forty-eight thousand, seven hundred forty-one dollars and nineteen cents).

One year ago, September 28, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,525,126,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred twenty-five billion, one hundred twenty-six million).

Five years ago, September 28, 1994, the Federal debt stood at